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Supreme Court makes major rulings on abortion, gun rights, corruption

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The US Supreme Court struck down abortion restrictions in Texas, ruled that domestic violence misdemeanor convictions are grounds to lose gun ownership rights, and raised the bar for prosecuting public officials on corruption charges.

In the Texas abortion law case, known as [Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt](#), the Court threw out a previous ruling by an appellate court in a 5-3 decision. Justices Breyer, Kennedy, Ginsburg, Sotomayor and Kagan were in the majority, while Thomas, Alito and Roberts dissented.

The Texas law, known as HB2, required abortion providers to have facilities similar to surgical outpatient centers. While the state said that the requirement was necessary to protect women's health, abortion right groups argued that the law was crafted to make it more difficult for women in Texas to obtain abortions.

The decision was immediately hailed by the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton.

[@HillaryClinton](#) SCOTUS's decision is a victory for women in Texas and across America. Safe abortion should be a right—not just on paper, but in reality. -H

Justice Clarence Thomas was the only member of the court who would have upheld the Texas statute outright. Justices John Roberts and Samuel Alito, two other conservative-leaning members of the Court, said that they favored require more analysis, according to [SCOTUSblog](#).

The Court also ruled against two plaintiffs in *Voisine v. United States*, a case with implications for gun ownership rights. Stephen Voisine and William Armstrong had argued that a federal law that barred them from owning firearms because of misdemeanor domestic violence convictions violated their constitutional rights.

In a 6-2 ruling, the court upheld the opinion that domestic violence convictions can result in gun ownership restrictions, even if the misdemeanor is only the result of recklessness rather than intent. Justices Roberts, Kennedy, Ginsburg, Breyer and Alito were in the majority, with Thomas and Sotomayor dissenting.

[@BostonGlobe](#) Unanimous [#SCOTUS](#) ruling makes it harder to prosecute elected officials accused of bribery  
<http://bos.gl/Z7Snylz>



The Supreme Court also announced its unanimous decision to vacate the [conviction](#) of former Virginia governor Bob McDonnell on corruption charges.

*"There is no doubt that this case is distasteful; it may be worse than that. But our concern is not with tawdry tales of Ferraris, Rolexes, and ball gowns," Chief Justice Roberts wrote. "It is instead with the broader legal implications of the government's boundless interpretation of the federal bribery statute."*

For something to qualify as political corruption, the government official would have to take formal action on a pending matter, not just set up meetings, the court ruled. A lower court will decide whether to set a new trial for McDonnell.

Monday's announcements were the last opinions to be issued by the Supreme Court this term.